Testimony for Public Health Committee Public Hearing March 7, 2022

My name is Debbie Shaffer, and I live in Farmington. I am testifying in favor of HB 5277—An Act Concerning the Establishment of Technical Standards for Medical Diagnostic Equipment that Promotes Accessibility in Health Care Facilities. I have a severe disability and have had many problems with inaccessible equipment. Most recently, I went to the orthopedist last week, and the doctor wanted an x-ray of my shoulder. Because it was taken in my wheelchair, he couldn't get a clear picture. Technologists came to get me a second time and told me where and how to park , and they put the film in back between my chair and my shoulder. I went back to the examining room and the doctor came in, looked at the x-ray and said it wasn't good enough and that I had to do it again. He said "I will help this time." We went in the x-ray room, and the technologists lifted up the arm of my wheelchair and I backed up near the x-ray table. The technologist put the film on the table and I had to lean over the edge of my chair and the doctor pulled on my shoulder to get it in the right position. It was very painful, and it would have been much better if I could have been transferred to the x-ray table or if the table was height adjustable.

I usually have someone with me when I go to the doctor, but they can't come all the time. There needs to be a trained nurse in the doctor's offices who knows about special equipment for people with disabilities and who is not afraid of helping them get what they need—someone who knows how to use the equipment.

In addition to this specific incident, I have problems in general with inaccessible equipment. When I go for appointments with my primary care doctor at Starling Physicians, I have to stay in my wheelchair for the physical exam because the examining table is not adjustable and the office staff are unwilling to transfer me to the table. The office also does not have a wheelchair accessible scale, so my healthcare provider is not able to accurately track my weight over time